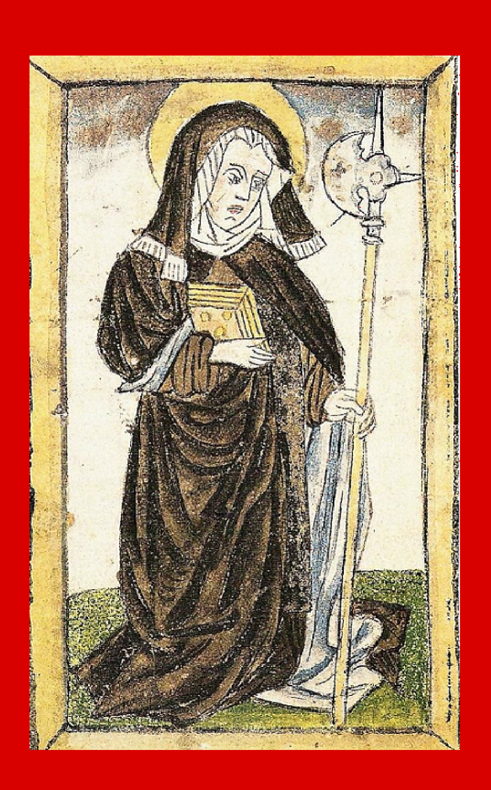
St. Wiborada-Lied

A hymn from *Gallus Cantata No. VI*



Text: Sister Wiborada Maria Duft
Tune: Othmar Schildknecht
Harmonization: Clive Strutt



Verlag



Cover illustration: The oldest known image of Saint Wiborada in the *Codex Sangallensis 586* (*c.* 1430). She is depicted holding a prayer book and a halberd, the latter symbolising her martyrdom.

Saint Wiborada – Anchorite and Martyr

Saint Wiborada, also known as Wiberat, Weibrath and Guiborat, has her liturgical feast on May 2nd. The following written by Annika Elizabeth Fisher is her entry in the *Holy People of the World: A Cross-Cultural Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, 2004 edited by Phyllis G. Jestice.

Wiborada

(d. 926 C.E.)
Christian recluse, prophet, martyr

Wiborada, the tenth-century recluse of the Christian monastery of St. Gall, was the first woman canonized by the Roman church. She displayed all the prized characteristics of an early medieval female saint: noble birth, virginity, bodily asceticism, violent martyrdom, and the ability to aid male figures of importance.

Growing up in the Swiss town of Klingnau, Wiborada spurned the luxuries of her aristocratic family. When her brother Hatto joined the monastery of St. Gall, she made his clothes and worked for the abbey, primarily by binding books for the library. Eventually, Wiborada joined Hatto, turning their house into an infirmary and saying the Latin offices with her brother. It was through her encouragement following a pilgrimage to Rome that Hatto decided to take his vows.

Although Wiborada's life became increasingly pious, a servant raised accusations that she was having improper sexual relations with Hatto. She was forced to undergo trial by ordeal. The charges were cleared when Bishop Salomon of Constance visited the abbey and recognized her goodness. Deciding to withdraw from the world, Wiborada first retreated to the mountain hermitage of St. George. Her austerity became well known, and people vied with each other to give her alms. Her desire for eremitical solitude increased so that by 891 Bishop Salomon agreed to wall her into a cell next to the church of St. Magnus, where she remained, practicing extraordinary mortifications, for thirty-four years. Due to her gifts for healing and prophecy, many came to see her, and other women, such as the blessed Rachild, whom Wiborada had cured, settled in nearby cells to also live as recluses. Among Wiborada's notable prophecies was her prediction that a young student at St. Gall would rise to the episcopate and should therefore not enter the monastery: This was the famous St. Ulrich, bishop of Augsburg.

Wiborada also had a vision that the invading Hungarians would storm the area and cause her martyrdom. Her warnings allowed the monks to escape, but she refused to leave her cell. In 926, the Hungarians burned the church and killed her with a hatchet while she knelt in prayer.

Wiborada was canonized in 1047. She was a figure of undisputed holiness and was immediately venerated as a saint. Wiborada is the patron of book lovers and sellers, the protector of items of learning usually associated with the medieval male clergy.

References and further reading:

Berschin, Walter.1982."Vereba und Wiborada: Mythos, Geschichte und Kult im X. Jahrhundert." *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv* 102: 5-15.
———. ed. 1983. *Vitae Sanctae Wiboradae: Die ältesten Lebensbeschreibungen der heiligen Wiborada*. Mitteilungen zur vaterländischen Geschichte, 51. St. Gall, Switzerland: Historischer Verein des Kantons St. Gallen.
Butler, Alban. 1956. "St. Wiborada, Virgin and Martyr." In *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, 2: 218-219. Edited and revised by Herbert Thurston and Donald Attwater, New York: P.J.Kennedy and Sons.

St. Wiborada-Lied

This piece, for SATB choir unaccompanied, forms part of the ***GALLUS CANTATA*** *No. VI "E Fabulis ac Picturis"*, and occupies the penultimate position in the score, the final piece being *Der Wiborada-Hymnus.*
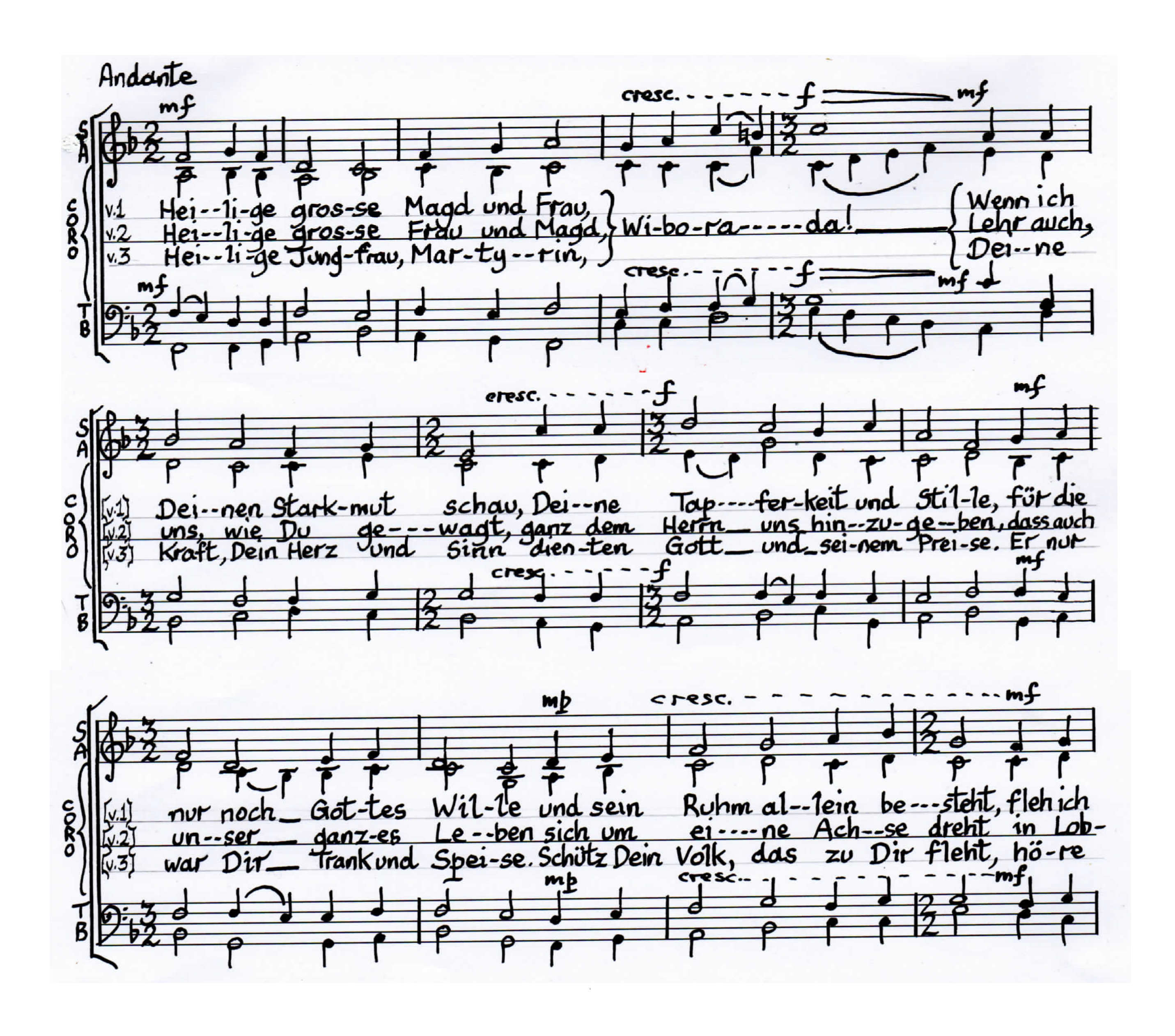
The Gallus Cantatas form part of a collection of unaccompanied choral works whose overall title is *VOCES CHRISTIANÆ*, the name implying the religious content of the texts.
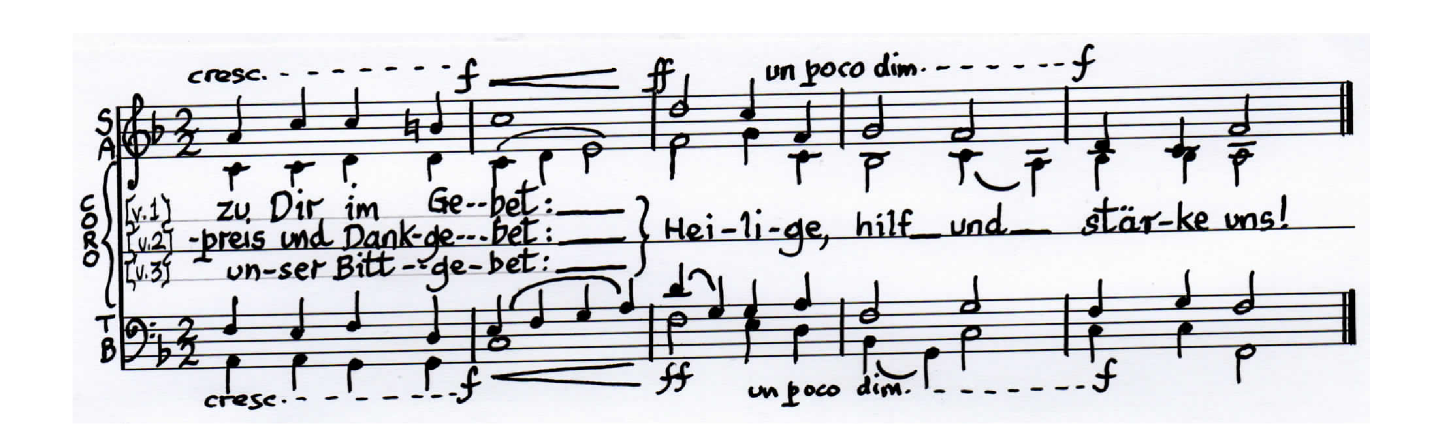
The *St. Wiborada-Lied* has a German text written by Sister Wiborada Maria Duft, and the tune is by Othmar Schildknecht, in a harmonised arrangement by Clive Strutt.

St. Wiborada-Lied

from ***GALLUS CANTATA No. VI*** by Clive Strutt
for SATB choir unaccompanied

Text: Sr. Wiborada Maria Duft
Tune: Othmar Schildknecht
Harmony: Clive Strutt (9th April, 2018)




cresc.
f
ff
un poco dim.
f
S
A
C
O
R
O
[v.1] zu Dir im Ge--bet:
[v.2] -preis und Dank-ge---bet:
[v.3] un-ser Bitt--ge-bet:
Hei-li-ge, hilf_ und_ stär-ke uns!
T
B
cresc.
f
ff
un poco dim.
f